**WARCOP PARISH COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT/POLICY**

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, public authorities (including Parish Councils’) have a duty to show regard for conserving biodiversity in all their actions. Furthermore, the UK Government has issued guidance for public authorities on ‘Complying with the Biodiversity Duty’ including timescales for Biodiversity Policies and Objectives. This policy forms a key part of that duty.

According to Defra, Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them. Biodiversity is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity, and has an important role to play in developing locally distinctive and sustainable communities.

Conservation of biodiversity is vital in our response to climate change and in the delivery of key ecosystem services such as food, flood management, pollination and provision of clean air and water.

This Act and duty also means that parish and town councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

**Aims and Objectives**

The object of this policy is to work towards enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of Warcop Parish. The Council will aim to manage and improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

•  manage its land and land it manages using environmentally-friendly practices that will promote biodiversity, where appropriate;

•  support local businesses & Council operations in the adoption of low impact practices;

•  support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

**Actions**

The Council will consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces.

The Council will aim to develop environmentally friendly areas for residents.

The Council will help to raise awareness of environmental issues and promote conservation projects in conjunction with appropriate bodies and residents.

The Council will consider sustainability and biodiversity when engaging with the planning system.

The Council will consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

The Council will aim to engage with businesses and the public regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.

The Council will manage its own operational duties to minimise its carbon footprint.

The Council will support local organisations seeking to protect and encourage increased biodiversity in the wider locality.

The council will monitor and take action to control the spread of invasive species (e.g. Himalayan Balsam) in the Parish.

***Approved for use by Warcop Parish Council at an ordinary Meeting on 02/11/2023***